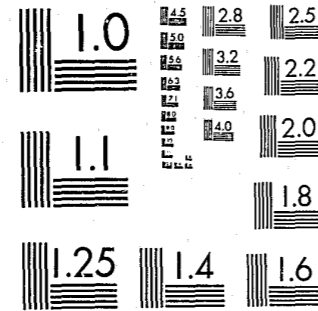


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U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

# Children in Custody: Advance Report on the 1979 Census of Public Juvenile Facilities

October 1980

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## General Findings

The total number of residents in public juvenile custody facilities across the Nation declined slightly between late 1977 and late 1979, while growth in the stock of public facilities virtually came to a halt for the first time in a decade. Indicative of continued progress toward a key objective of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, the decline in population centered on "status" offenders, those whose conduct would not be an offense if committed by an adult (e.g., curfew violators, truants, and runaways). The decrease during the 2-year period was entirely among girls, whereas there was a small increase in the number of boys in custody. The leveling off in the number of facilities operated by State and local governments was related, at least in part, to an increased role by small, community-based facilities in the private sector and the use of foster homes as a means of diverting status offenders from the juvenile justice system.<sup>1</sup>

The 1979 Census of Public Juvenile Facilities revealed that approximately 45,300 residents were housed in 993 public facilities nationwide at yearend, or 1 percent fewer than the 45,900 counted in nearly the same number of establishments (992) 2 years earlier. In contrast to the sharp drop in status offenders during the 2-year period--from about 1 in 10 to nearly 1 in 20 of all juveniles in custody--the number held for delinquency (those whose conduct would be regarded as criminal if committed by adults) increased by 4 percent.

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<sup>1</sup>Highlights of the 1979 Census of Private Juvenile Facilities will be presented in a forthcoming report. Foster homes, private residences for the placement of fewer than 3 juveniles, were outside the scope of the juvenile facility censuses.

The ratio of committed to detained youths--those already placed versus those awaiting adjudication or placement--remained at roughly 3 to 1. Long-term facilities, those housing mainly adjudicated youths, outnumbered short-term, or pre-placement, residences by roughly 5 to 4. Although there was a slight decline in the number of long-term "open" residences, they comprised 3 of every 5 long-term facilities.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the 1977-79 decline in the number of girls in custody, their share of the total juvenile population was reduced from 16 to 14 percent--a continuation of a trend noted in the 1977 census. As in 1977, black youths comprised about a third of all juveniles held in public sector facilities, or about 2.5 times more than their relative number among the general U.S. population age 10-19. The proportion of juveniles in custody who were of Hispanic origin rose from 9 to 10 percent between 1977 and 1979, as compared with their 6-percent contribution to the age-relevant population at large.

For the first time during the decade, the annual resident turnover rate at public facilities was well below the 600,000 level for both ad-

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<sup>2</sup>Facilities enumerated in the 1977 and 1979 censuses were classified as either open or institutional, based on responses to questions on degree of access to the community and the extent of in-house physical and staff controls. The great majority of facilities identified in earlier censuses as detention centers, diagnostic centers, or training schools, and a significant proportion of ranches, fall into the institutional category, whereas most of those identified as shelters or group homes, as well as some ranches, can be classified as open. Additional details on this classification procedure will appear in a follow-up report.

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missions and departures--a development consistent with a tendency in some jurisdictions to divert status and nonoffenders from the juvenile justice system. As a result of this tendency, there was a continued increase in the average age of juveniles held, which from 1973 on moved upward from 15.2 to 15.5 years for boys and from 14.9 to 15.1 years for girls. The average length of stay for juveniles in public facilities showed no significant change between 1977 and 1979, remaining at about half a month for the detained population and 6 months for the committed. In contrast to the seriously crowded conditions in many adult correctional institutions, only about 1 in every 10 public juvenile facilities was being used at more than 100 percent of design capacity in 1979, and approximately a third of the total were less than 70 percent occupied.

While the population in public facilities declined slightly during the latest census period, staff size was leveling off. This abatement in personnel growth--the first during the 1970's--resulted from a 6-percent decrease in part-time staff that offset continued expansion in the number of full-time workers. The latter maintained a 1 to 1 ratio with juveniles in 1979, the same as 2 years earlier and a notable improvement over the 1.4 clients for each full-time staff member at the beginning of the decade. Total expenditures within the public sector increased by nearly a fifth, from \$708 million in 1977 to \$840 million in 1979--about the same relative increase as occurred between 1975 and 1977--while operating costs per resident rose from \$14,123 to \$16,512.

Approximately 3 out of every 5 States shared in the decline in the number of residents held in public facilities between yearend 1977 and 1979, the largest absolute decreases occurring in Oklahoma (301), Texas (239), and Wisconsin (211). In con-

trast, California, the leader among jurisdictions showing a countertrend, reported an 896-resident increase over 1977, followed by New Jersey (294) and Alabama (164). The highest ratios of juveniles per 100,000 resident population in 1979 were found in the District of Columbia (67), Nevada (50), and California (48)--the same jurisdictions as in 1977. The lowest ratios were exhibited by Connecticut (8), New York (8), and Massachusetts (2), also among the lowest in 1977.

Because of its large, 40-facility drop (including at least 27 group homes that were contracted out to private operators), the State of New York contributed importantly to the post-1977 leveling off in public facility growth. Overall, there were facility decreases in 15 States, no change in 15, and increases in 21; by comparison, from mid-1975 to yearend 1977, jurisdictions gaining public residences outnumbered decliners by nearly 3 to 1. Fewer States also reported net staff growth during 1977-79, about half showing increases, as compared with the two-thirds that registered gains between 1975 and 1977.

Inflation helped push up total expenditures for public juvenile facilities in every State during the last 2 years of the decade. Cost rises of 30 percent or more took place in 17 jurisdictions.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census conducted the 1977 and 1979 Censuses of Public Juvenile Facilities. Detailed results of those enumerations will be published together with State and national tables, a description of data collection methods, a glossary, and questionnaire facsimiles in a forthcoming report. Information in this advance report is preliminary and subject to revision; preliminary results of the Census of Private Juvenile Facilities will be released in a report similar to this one.

Table 1. Selected characteristics of public juvenile custody residents and facilities, 1971, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, and 1979

Characteristic	1971	1973	1974	1975	1977	1979
Number of residents	57,239	47,983	47,268	49,126	45,920	45,251
Juvenile	54,729	45,694	44,922	46,980	44,096	43,089
Male	41,781	35,057	34,783	37,926	36,921	37,063
Female	12,948	10,637	10,139	9,054	7,175	6,026
Adult	2,510	2,289	2,346	2,146	1,824	2,162
Average age (years) <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	NA	NA	15.3	15.4
Male	NA	15.2	15.3	15.3	15.4	15.5
Female	NA	14.9	14.9	15.0	15.1	15.1
Number of admissions <sup>2</sup>	616,766	600,960	647,175	641,189	614,385	564,875
Number of departures <sup>2</sup>	614,606	594,207	640,408	632,983	622,151	556,815
Average daily number of residents <sup>2</sup>	58,429	47,385	46,753	48,794	48,032	47,642
Number of facilities	722	794	829	874	992	993
Short term	338	355	371	387	448	458
Long term	384	439	458	487	544	535
Facility occupancy rate (percent) <sup>2</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	100
Occupied less than 70 percent	36	44	42	36	32	34
Occupied 70-100 percent	48	44	46	51	59	55
Occupied more than 100 percent	16	12	12	13	9	11
Number of personnel	43,372	44,845	46,276	52,534	61,060	60,889
Full time	39,521	39,216	39,391	41,156	43,322	44,234
Part time	3,851	5,629	6,885	11,378	17,738	16,655
Juveniles per full-time staff member	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
Expenditures (thousands of dollars)	456,474	483,941	508,630	594,146	707,732	839,895
Capital	47,365	30,127	24,536	34,510	29,366	53,242
Operating	409,109	453,814	484,094	559,636	678,366	786,653
Per capita operating cost (dollars) <sup>3</sup>	7,002	9,577	10,354	11,469	14,123	16,512

NOTE: Data for 1971-75 are as of June 30 and for 1977 and 1979 as of December 31, except for figures on admissions and departures, average daily number of residents, facility occupancy rate, expenditures, and operating costs, which are for an annual period, either calendar or fiscal year.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Based on juvenile residents only.

<sup>2</sup>Based on all residents (juvenile and adult).

<sup>3</sup>Based on average daily number of residents.

Table 2. Selected characteristics of public juvenile custody residents (juveniles only) and facilities, by type of facility, 1977 and 1979

Characteristic	Type of facility					
	All facilities		Short-term		Long-term	
	1977	1979	1977	1979	1977	1979
Number of juveniles	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Sex	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Male	36,921	37,063	9,521	9,976	27,400	27,087
Female	7,175	6,026	2,408	2,165	4,767	3,861
Average age (years)	15.3	15.4	15.2	15.1	15.6	15.6
Race	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
White	27,963	25,935	7,893	7,284	20,070	18,651
Black	14,865	13,727	3,609	3,431	11,256	10,296
Other	1,045	948	204	203	841	745
Not reported <sup>1</sup>	223	2,479	223	1,223	0	1,256
Ethnic composition	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Hispanic	4,009	4,393	1,336	1,439	2,673	2,954
Non-Hispanic	40,087	38,696	10,593	10,702	29,494	27,994
Adjudication status	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Detained	11,190	11,508	10,619	10,816	571	692
Committed	32,477	31,284	1,305	1,278	31,172	30,006
Voluntary admission	429	297	5	47	424	250
Reason held	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Delinquency	37,846	39,455	10,074	10,787	27,772	28,668
Status offense	4,916	2,734	1,540	1,030	3,376	1,704
Other <sup>2</sup>	1,334	900	315	324	1,019	576
Physical environment	44,096	43,089	11,929	12,141	32,167	30,948
Institutional facilities	32,197	31,817	11,363	11,255	20,834	20,562
Open facilities	11,899	11,272	566	886	11,333	10,386
Average length of stay (days)	107	106	14	15	184	183
Detained	12	14	12	13	18	22
Committed	179	178	76	69	188	189
Number of facilities	992	993	448	458	544	535
Institutional facilities	596	608	396	400	200	208
Open facilities	396	385	52	58	344	327
Frequency of community access	992	993	448	458	544	535
Daily or almost daily	313	287	59	68	254	219
Weekly or less frequently	264	301	51	73	213	228
Never	415	405	338	317	77	88
Security level	992	993	448	458	544	535
Strict	228	290	202	234	26	56
Medium	390	308	192	163	198	145
Minimal or none	374	395	54	61	320	334
Number of personnel	61,060	60,889	22,150	22,517	38,910	38,372
Payroll	46,840	47,843	16,863	17,542	29,977	30,301
Nonpayroll	3,014	2,960	1,648	1,649	1,366	1,311
Community volunteer	11,206	10,086	3,639	3,326	7,567	6,760

NOTE: All data are as of December 31, except average length of stay which are for the calendar year.

<sup>1</sup>In 1979 this category included 1,976 juveniles (772 short-term and 1,204 long-term) in 51 Florida facilities for whom race data were not reported.

<sup>2</sup>In 1977 this category included 706 nonoffenders held for dependency, neglect or abuse, and 115 for emotional disturbance or mental retardation; 429 juveniles who admitted themselves to a facility or were referred by a parent, court, or school, without being adjudged for an offense; and 84 who were not classifiable. In 1979 the corresponding numbers were 498, 56, 297, and 49, respectively.

Table 3. Selected characteristics of public juvenile custody facilities-- States, yearend 1977 and 1979

State	Residents		Facilities		Staff		Expenditures <sup>1</sup>	
	1977	1979	1977	1979	1977	1979	1977	1979
United States	45,920	45,251	992	993	61,060	60,889	707,732	839,895
Alabama	474	638	21	22	694	832	6,250	8,310
Alaska	131	142	2	2	129	127	3,541	4,024
Arizona	653	574	17	18	527	772	7,854	10,108
Arkansas	423	313	10	9	397	428	4,767	5,465
California	10,031	10,927	114	113	15,941	16,516	162,046	182,255
Colorado	779	627	13	14	513	580	7,046	8,227
Connecticut	235	245	4	4	377	372	4,433	6,098
Delaware	213	206	5	5	281	169	3,405	3,583
District of Columbia	567	434	13	14	446	421	7,684	7,991
Florida	2,026	2,012	50	52	1,892	1,807	26,815	31,531
Georgia	1,194	1,156	26	23	1,213	1,199	13,585	16,288
Hawaii	103	124	3	4	136	133	2,570	2,625
Idaho	128	195	2	2	156	165	2,470	3,347
Illinois	1,208	1,175	25	24	1,826	1,944	24,397	29,391
Indiana	1,008	1,094	17	16	1,206	1,015	11,966	15,395
Iowa	409	380	14	11	553	545	7,465	8,248
Kansas	627	664	14	13	801	823	10,584	14,259
Kentucky	635	691	23	34	1,063	677	7,071	8,897
Louisiana	923	1,017	13	13	1,415	1,033	12,148	18,059
Maine	157	181	1	1	230	269	2,601	3,656
Maryland	972	977	15	14	1,144	1,083	14,119	14,593
Massachusetts	180	114	9	10	283	291	3,682	4,304
Michigan	1,884	1,795	49	49	2,216	2,339	34,503	42,912
Minnesota	626	746	21	21	952	976	12,410	15,327
Mississippi	364	353	7	9	343	594	3,194	8,161
Missouri	1,130	1,002	55	50	1,523	1,256	12,879	15,631
Montana	264	176	8	7	289	199	3,829	4,247
Nebraska	242	231	4	5	256	292	3,244	4,116
Nevada	347	361	6	7	283	311	5,471	7,500
New Hampshire	164	182	1	1	154	180	2,336	3,111
New Jersey	1,094	1,388	43	50	1,860	2,254	21,205	28,656
New Mexico	373	332	4	7	267	294	3,628	7,476
New York	1,545	1,397	95	55	3,011	2,723	37,054	43,878
North Carolina	868	729	15	22	934	1,190	9,760	13,317
North Dakota	116	102	6	6	128	130	1,547	1,956
Ohio	2,717	2,541	49	50	3,752	4,336	41,683	43,453
Oklahoma	918	617	10	11	1,086	1,053	12,945	16,470
Oregon	769	825	11	13	955	767	10,218	14,249
Pennsylvania	1,087	1,128	31	27	1,640	1,686	28,559	30,030
Rhode Island	91	86	2	2	208	178	2,657	3,407
South Carolina	595	623	8	9	866	750	5,976	7,183
South Dakota	183	147	5	5	149	136	1,987	2,675
Tennessee	1,323	1,125	17	27	1,182	1,372	12,830	16,514
Texas	1,952	1,713	30	30	2,443	1,734	29,356	23,233
Utah	233	227	9	10	472	296	4,452	5,353
Vermont	98	0	1	0	108	0	1,425	0
Virginia	1,348	1,400	40	51	1,745	1,933	18,247	26,337
Washington	1,117	1,025	32	30	1,797	1,581	22,477	29,607
West Virginia	369	256	10	9	341	290	3,967	3,543
Wisconsin	887	676	10	10	775	733	11,873	12,877
Wyoming	140	182	2	2	102	105	1,525	2,023

<sup>1</sup>Total capital and operating expenditures during either the 1977 or 1979 fiscal years. Detail does not add to total shown because of rounding.

**END**